

# THE CREMONA

With which is incorporated

## 'THE VIOLINIST,' A Record of the String World.

*Edited by J. Nicholson-Smith.*

*Publishers: The Sanctuary Press, Surrey Chambers, No. 11, Cursitor Street, Chancery Lane, E.C.*

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Vol. III, No. 26.

January 18th, 1909.

Price, TWOPENCE.

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### The Romance of Queen Elizabeth's Violin.

By OLGA RACSTER.

'She was of admirable beauty and well deserving a crown; of modesty, gravity, excellent wit, happy memory, and indefatigably given to the study of learning.'

Camden 'Annals, or the History of the late Queen Elizabeth of England.'

#### CHAPTER I.

**D**URING the winter and summer of the year 1581, Her Majesty Elizabeth of England, was somewhat perilously immersed in a—flirtation.

The danger did not lurk so much in the flirtation itself—for she was well versed in affairs of the heart—as in the proximity of the marriage bond to which it brought her. Not that she had any objection to the married state, as a matter of fact, the subject of matrimony was one which interested her more than most. But, there was an obstacle as far as she was concerned, and this obstacle took the form of a rooted aversion to a division of her royal authority.

'A husband would be agreeable!'—said the woman, but—'No man's hand shall share my sceptre?'—said the Queen.

What wonder then that in past years, Philip of Spain, Charles IX, the Archduke of Austria, and her other numerous suitors had

scintillated round her matrimonial hook in vain? Like amiable fish, they had contemplated the estimable bait, had watched, waited, nibbled, and eventually advanced, or retired, according to the caprice of the royal angler.

Lately a fresh excitement had been provided for the Queen in the matrimonial overtures of François Valois, Duc d'Alençons, who was rapidly pushing his way into the foremost rank of her suitors. Since the month of January, Alençon's envoy—Count Simiers—had been in England paving the way for his master with dulcet words and flattering blandishments. A past master at such games, the designing courtier had insinuated, flirted, and even made violent love to the Queen under the shelter of his master's name. He bewitched her womanly vanity, wheedled and cajoled her—on Alençon's account—with such consummate tact that at length, like Shakspeare's Beatrice, she imagined herself in love with the absent Benedict.

Shortly after Simiers's arrival in England, Elizabeth began to answer Alençon's letters with warmth. She declared that his messages were worthy to be graven on stone; avowed eternal friendship for him; expressed the hope that he would attain Nestor's years, and prayed that his foes might ever be confounded.

The Duke was transported into an ecstasy of delight over her epistles, and carefully nurtured the propitious correspondence. Educated, as he had been, at a court where love-making was looked upon almost as a vocation, and backed by his scheming mother, Catherine de Medici, Alençon



flattered, languished, and extolled—on parchment—with almost blasphemous vehemence. Letters passed and re-passed between the royal lovers. Envoys came to England with handsome presents; ministers and ambassadors exchanged courtesies, and finally matters came to such a pass that some kind of decision became imperative. Walsingham, Sussex, Leicester and Burghley debated the question, and the last named attempted to discuss the position with his royal mistress. For answer the Queen put him off with a flippant laugh, and archly demanded information as to the appearance of the prospective bridegroom.

'How tall is he?' she queried.

'As tall as I am,' replied her diplomatic secretary. Elizabeth, keenly realizing how little the veracity of her ministers could be relied upon where matrimony was at stake, glanced quickly at Burghley, and raising her hand as though to tap him, jerked out: 'About as tall as your grandson, you mean!'

Eventually driven into a corner for a direct answer as to her intentions regarding the French 'Monsieur,' Elizabeth declared she would never marry a man whom she had not seen. 'If the Prince likes to come to England' she said, 'he may do so, but.'—with a shrug—'he must not take offence if I do not like him when I see him.'

Such a request as this was unprecedented in the annals of court etiquette. Even Catherine de Medici—whose scheming spirit paid small heed to most obstacles—was scandalized. Yet, notwithstanding her opinion that her son's visit to England would be an undignified procedure for a Prince of the Royal House of France, still her son—the King—persuaded her to submit to any conditions laid down by Elizabeth; urging cogent reasons for the drawing together of England and France.

At length came the decision: 'Alençon should go to England.' Pending his departure, the French Prince wrote his English Goddess love letters ardent enough to satisfy the most exacting mistress, and he received appropriately coquettish replies from Elizabeth.

Amidst this hurly burly of prospective matrimony it was not surprising that former favourites of the Queen found themselves neglected, and, bound by a common cause become almost friendly. My Lord of Leicester, however, was not among these. He held himself aloof; waxed more sulky day by day, and a mad jealousy both of Simiers and Alençon took possession of him. His heart grew black with hate. His dark face gleamed with rage; and his tongue grew bitter with sarcasm. On two occasions he instigated

assassins to murder Simiers, and the failure of his attempts only served to add fuel to the fire of his wrath.

Elizabeth—beside herself with indignation at the conduct of her handsome Master of the Horse—first upbraided him, in language none too delicate, and then commanded him to retire to Greenwich Castle and remain there according to her pleasure.

(To be continued).

## Elgar's New Symphony

(in A flat. Op. 55).

By A. R.

ON NEW YEAR'S DAY in the afternoon—the Queen's Hall, Langham Place, being nearly full, Sir Edward

Elgar conducted his first Symphony for the first time in London. This was a memorable performance, not because of the very special excellence of the orchestra—there was a decided weakness both in actual tune and depth of the first strings and the brass was too strident, but because the composer brought out certain vital qualities which were wanting under the baton of Richter, to whom the work is dedicated. On the other hand Richter got more fire imparted into the second movement than did the composer. The great merit of Sir Elgar's exposition was the slower tempo of the beginning and the evidently affectionate dwelling—quite without affected sentiment, however—on the tenderer sustained parts.

Thank heavens, the work required no programme, although a good deal of 'chatter' was printed in the only one obtainable (and a few facts).

The work is nobly conceived and finely constructed.

Its orchestra is peculiar. Eight firsts, seconds, 'cellos and basses. I do not remember the violas but think there were four, piccolo, three flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, bass clarinet, cor anglais, two bassoons, one double bassoon, four horns, three trombones, three trumpets, two harps, tuba, three drums and a variety of other instruments to smite. And it has four movements.

(1) 'Andant—allegro,' (2) 'Allegro molto,' (3) 'Adagio,' (4) Lento—allegro.' No. 1 took six minutes to play as far as the 'allegro appassionato,' and to the 'allegro molto' took twenty-two minutes, which latter took eight minutes. The 'adagio' took twelve and the 'finale' the same. The whole took fifty-five minutes with pauses.

The work exhibits a definitely national





QUEEN ELIZABETH.

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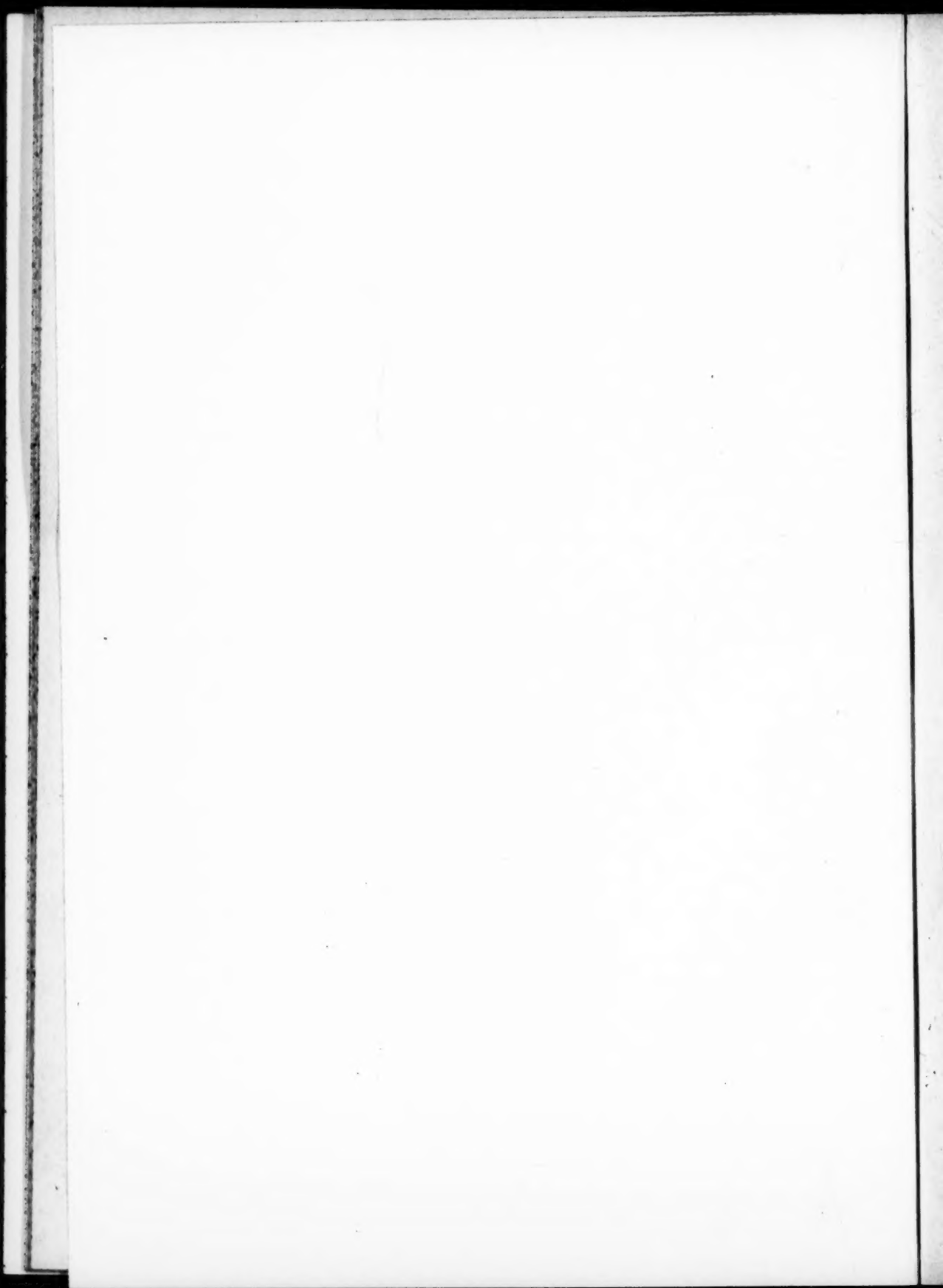
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idiom and may be taken as clear indication that British music has indeed been re-born, and, moreover, that it is by far the most vital work which is being produced in the world at present.

The 'adagio' and the extraordinarily effective 'finale' seemed to please most, but the work had the heartiest of receptions, and its author a tremendous ovation, so that it was perhaps somewhat difficult to be discerning. Sir Edward was recalled five times.

Tchaikovsky supplied the rest of the programme with Mr. Wood as interpreter. His renderings of the 'Caisse Noisette Suite,' and the '1812 overture' are well known so we will pass to the remaining item which preceded the Symphony, viz., Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto, with Miss Marie Hall as soloist. There was a good deal of charm in her performance, particularly in wooing delicate passages, but as a whole her rendering does not compare favourably with that of others, especially those who have had Auer's training. There was a tendency, which is noticeable in most performers, to indulge in more pace in the last movements of this concerto, and that by Mendelssohn, to the great detriment of the music. It was a great relief after a headlong race to feel the reins suddenly well-controlled by the wood-wind and afterwards the whole performance benefited. The beautiful 'canzonetta' was charmingly played.

### National Anthem Music.

The order, just issued by the Army Council, that 'God Save the King' is to be played by military bands to faster time than heretofore, is warmly supported by Sir William Cummings, principal of the Guildhall School of Music.

Sir William has made a special study of the National Anthem, on the history of which he has written a book. 'I am glad,' he has said, 'that attention has been called to the change. I am very keen on "God Save the King."' After trying the old time crochet 60, and the new crochet 84, on his piano, Sir William says, 'Of course, this applies to military bands, and not to singing. Eighty-four is much too fast for singing. Seventy is the time for that. As a matter of fact, at dinners there has been a general tendency to get it much too fast. At the Philharmonic concert, which Mr. Wood conducted, the time was exactly right. That was 70. It is as well to have some standard. I see the change is attributed to the King. I know that the Royal Family are greatly interested in the National Anthem, as when my book was published I had several communications on the subject.'

## The Incorporated Society of Musicians.

THE Incorporated Society of Musicians, after their labours at the annual conference displayed their creative powers at the Queen's Hall, for which the services of the London Symphony Orchestra, under Mr. Allen Gill, had been retained. Except that the symphony proper was not represented, all of orchestral writing, from the 'suite' to the 'symphonic poem,' were shown.

The programme contained six new orchestral works, all by members of the society, those calling for the most attention being, Mr. H. E. Geehl's 'Comedy Overture,' Dr. James Lyon's 'The Miracle of Roses,' and Mr. J. C. Ames's symphonic poem, 'Sir Galahad.' The comedy overture is bright, clever, and contains originality, while the writing shows the composer to have firm command of orchestral technique. Dr. Lyon strikes a deeper note in 'The Miracle of the Roses,' which seems to be in the form of a tone-poem rather than a 'suite'—for it tells a tale of love and vengeance. The first movement depicts the innocence and purity of the maid, the second the evil passion of Hamuel and his vengeance, and the last the condemnation to death of the maid by burning at the stake, during which the hand of God strikes Hamuel and holds the maid harmless from the rising flames.

From technical and constructive points of view 'Sir Galahad' was the successful work of the evening, the breadth and freedom of orchestration and the broad and melodious 'Sir Galahad' theme, which is finally worked up to a good climax, being effective.

The other three works, were Dr. G. P. Allen's scena, 'To Music,' Mr. J. B. McEwen's 'Coronach,' and Mr. Weston Nicholls's 'In English Seas.' Mr. McEwen showed a decided individuality of style in his 'Coronach.'

The conflicting methods of voice trainers were the subject of an interesting discussion, at the annual conference of the Incorporated Society of Musicians, held in the Great Central Hotel.

Dr. H. H. Hulbert, Lecturer on Voice and Health to the University of London and to the London County Council, speaking upon 'The Scientific Basis of Vocal Culture,' said that voice trainers could be roughly divided into three classes—those who mistook fads for science and made a great parade of their methods; those who professed to follow nature, ignoring science altogether; and

## THE CREMONA.

thirdly, those who felt that there must be definite help to be obtained from science. Teachers belonging to class one were to be pitied, and the second were to be ignored. With regard to the third, there was a very decided increase in the ranks of those who believed that practical help could be derived from a knowledge of the working of the vocal apparatus.

Referring to respiration. Dr. Hulbert said that there was the method in which the teacher told the child to sit on the floor, then sat on his chest and told him to breathe (laughter). Perhaps that was what Dr. Cumming's young ladies meant when they defined 'obbligato' as 'in an obliging manner' (renewed laughter). In America, he was told, there was a man who breathed so deeply that when he stood in a basin of water bubbles came out between his toes (loud laughter). Inspiration was taught by what was called deep breathing, which, so far from making the chest wall elastic, made it stiff, and was a harmful exercise. If they really wished to produce a large chest and get results quickly, the best thing was to buy a cornet, blow the cornet as hard as they could, and while blowing run as fast as they could (laughter).

Dr. Prout said that he 'spoke as a fool,' because he knew absolutely nothing about voice production. He had met with so many different views on the subject and with so many teachers who thought other teachers were asses that he was in the position of Pilate asking, 'What is truth?'

## The Hungarian Society.

THIS SOCIETY—whose object is to familiarize the British public with a closer knowledge of the vast resources, history, arts, music, and literature of Hungary—gave an interesting 'conversazione' on Tuesday evening, December 15th, at the galleries of the Royal Society of British Artists in Suffolk Street, S.W. A numerous and distinguished company were welcomed by H. E. Baron Ernő de Daniel (acting president), Mr. Louis Felberman (acting vice-president), and Sir J. Cameron Lamb, C.B., C.M.G., (president of the British Advisory Council). The following programme was excellently rendered by distinguished artists:—

## PROGRAMME.

SOLO PIANOFORTE	...	MISS ELSIE HALL
Rhapsody 14	...	Liszt
Alouettes	...	Leschetitzky
Humoresque	...	York Bowen

SONGS	...	MR. FRASER GANGE
'The Swallows'	...	...
'Let the solid ground'	...	Somerville
'The Two Grenadiers'	...	Schumann

SONGS	...	MISS PHYLLIS ARCHIBALD
'Er Ist's'	...	Wolf
'Haakon's Slumber Song'	...	Adolphe Mann
Accompanied by composer		Saint-Saens
'Mon Cœur s'ouvre à ta voix'	...	Saint-Saens

SOLO VIOLIN	...	MISS IVY ANGROVE
Slavische Tänze 1 and 3	...	Dvorak
Wiegenlied	...	Ueslera
Perpetuum Mobile	...	Novacek

SONGS	...	MR. NOEL FLEMING
'Ein Schwan'	...	Grieg
'Provenzalisches Lied'	...	Schumann
'In Sympathy'	...	France Leoni

SONGS	...	MISS IRENE STRAUSS
'Träume'	...	R. Wagner
'Am Kamin'	...	Chas. Ledever
'La Serenata'	...	Tosti

SOLO 'CELLO	...	MR. DEZSÖ KORDY
Nocturne (2)	...	Chopin
Csardas	...	D. Kordy
Hungarian folk-songs	...	Keller-Bela

Chevalier Wilhelm Ganz officiated as hon. musical director: Messrs. Reginald Clarke, Raphael Roche, and Adolphe Mann were accompanists on the Chappell Concert Grand pianoforte. F.P.M.

## Cut Leaves.

'Peter Pan,' keepsake. Edited by D. S. O'Connor, with the foreword by W. T. Stead. **Chatto and Windus**, 1908, paper covers. Illustrated, p. i-iv, 1-32.

This is the story of Peter Pan briefly retold from Mr. J. M. Barrie's fantasy, the illustrations are from the play, and should be helpful to children or their elders, for in a few words it gives them ideas of what they are to see and hence helps them to understand it, or if they have been, in keeping the memory green and clearing up any points they may not have understood. There is also a complete caste given (for all the productions with dates) of all those who helped to give pleasure to the children.

**'The Professional Pocket Book, or Daily and Hourly Engagement Dairy for 1909.** Specially adapted for professional engagements, published according to the plan of the late Sir Julius Benedict by RUDALL, CARTE & Co., of No. 23, Berners Street, W.

This handy pocket book gives very useful information in the beginning, with Calendar for 1909 and 1910, then follows a number of pages for memoranda. There is a pocket in the front and it can be obtained in leather or cloth.

The diary itself is divided into three parts of 4 months each, so that you need not carry the portion you are not using about with you. A week is given at each opening, and the hours from 9 o'clock a.m. to 8 o'clock p.m. are set down in detail. It is the best pocket engagement book we have seen and invaluable to the professional man. We only wish the hours had been carried to 11 o'clock instead of 8 o'clock, as we think many professors of music have their evenings often filled with pupils who only have their evenings free.





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**A MYSTERY SOLVED.**

**WHAT** is the cause of the peculiar subtle quality of tone obtained by the old Italian Violin Makers?

Not the model, because they are all sorts of models, small, large, flat or highly built; not the wood, because the same kind of wood has been tried, both old and new, also the most careful copying, each and all have resulted in one thing—failure.

The most reasonable of the many explanations is that it must be found in the lost and beautiful varnish.

The secret is undoubtedly in the varnish with which the old masters impregnated the absorbent wood, altering its nature, thus making it much more resonant and increasing its acoustical properties.

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From the late DR. JOACHIM. 12th November, 1904.  
I am happy to say that I have a very high opinion of their merits. The tone speaks easily and is of a fine quality. I have seldom met with new instruments that pleased me so much.

JOSEPH JOACHIM.

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Author of 'Violin Makers of To-day,' &c. 18th July, 1898.  
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Reply G.E.

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'Brahms' by H. C. Coles. Price 2/- nett, with a portrait of Brahms, and illustrated with musical examples, p. i-x, p. 1-168. Published by JOHN LANE, The Bodley Head, Vigo Street, 1908.

This little book is one of 'The Music of the Masters' Series. Edited by Wakeling Dry. It gives a concise bibliography and a chronological table of Brahms' life. The chapters are admirably written; critical and yet not too technical although thorough; they are in a language that can be understood by others than the master of music, and are hence very helpful in the study or following of any of an author's works. A complete list of works is given at the end. The chapters speak of Sonatas, Pianoforte and Chamber Music, Orchestra, Concerts, Songs, Choral Works and Chapter IX deals with Brahms's position.

## 'The Violinist.'

### Famous Violinist's Violins.

Miss K. Parlow's we spoke of in two previous issues as a Guarnerius, but the reports did not quite tally. It is, however, reputed to have once belonged to Voltri.

Joska Szigeti plays on one given to him by a lady in Hungary. It is by the Amati School. He also has a Guadagnini.

Johannes Wolff possesses three instruments an 'unknown,' a Guarnerius, and an Amati.

Miss Marie Hall's instrument we have mentioned in our pages before. Her favourite, however, is the 'Viotti Strad' dated 1709 and played on by Paganini. She paid Mr. George Hart, of Wardour Street, £1,600 for it, and in the States was offered over £2,000 for it. Her previous instrument was a Guadagnini.

Mischa Elman is said to have his favourites, a Strad which once belonged to Joachim and then belonged to Willy Burmester, said to be valued at between £2,000 and £3,000 and an Amati purchased for him by the Duke Mecklenburg-Strelitz.

W. H. Squire possesses a Carlo Bergonzi 'cello, made about 1740—it is a fine instrument formerly belonging to Gustave Libotton. Some dealers decry Bergonzi 'cellos, but the late Mr. George Hart and the present Mr. George Hart are authorities that no one can go against, and they have always given their undoubted opinion to the contrary.

### Violin Stolen.

On New Year's day in the afternoon, the side plate glass window of Messrs. J. B. Cramér's premises in High Street, Notting Hill, was smashed and a violin by Daniel Parker, formerly that used for solo purposes by Mr. James Nelson, was stolen. The thief got away unseen.

## The Hambourg Quartet.

At their fourth concert, at the Æolian Hall, the Hambourg Quartet performed for the first time in London a String Quartet in G major by Kopylow, who is a composer of the young Russian school. The work is set out on orthodox lines and is chiefly remarkable for the way in which folk songs are cleverly woven into the texture of the score. The music is of a light, graceful, melodious character, and flows on as calmly and clearly as a summer stream. Of the four movements, the most attractive are a scherzo, containing a trio with a folk song theme of a bright, arresting type, and a final allegro with a theme suggestive of a dance measure. The development is ingenious and the music leads up to a strong climax.

## The Grimson Quartet.

The playing of the Grimson Quartet at the St. James's Hall fully justified the favourable impression which they created on the last occasion.

It is not only rhythmic control and balance of tone that enable these musicians to make their performances acceptable, but it is the poetry of emotion which they infuse into their playing, and which induces their listeners to realize the redundant beauty of the music. It was this feature that was so conspicuous in their reading of Schubert's Quintet in C major (op. 163) for two violins, viola, and two 'cellos. The second and last movements were striking for the rich organ-like tone heard, in effective contrast to the lightness and delicacy of the other portions of the work.

The programme included Grieg's Sonata in C minor for pianoforte and violin (op. 45) and Siendsen's Octet in A major for four violins, two violas, and two 'cellos.

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## Edward MacDowell.

Pianist and Composer: b. New York, December 18th. 1861;  
d. February, 1908.

By A. R.

(Concluded from p. 145).

With op. 48 (*The Indian Suite*), which is dedicated to the Boston Symphony Orchestra and its sometime conductor (Emil Pauer), MacDowell seems to have found himself. There had been many fore-shadowings previously of this maturer style, but nothing which conveyed the grip—the sense of mastery—of this work. It is, moreover, echoless. One does not find this passage reminiscent of Brahms, that of Raff (his master), or, again, this of Wagner. But all is the fresh individuality of MacDowell.

At its first performance, in December, 1897, at Boston, Huneker, Krehbiel and other well-known critics stated that the work well stood the severe ordeal of being in the same programme with the sixth Symphony of the experienced famous Russian, Tchaikovsky.

Thematically, it is, in the main, based on the melodies of the North American Indians, and it is rather amusing to note that MacDowell somewhat grudgingly says, in effect, if you must dub them programmatically, (1) should be called 'Legend,' (2) 'Love Song,' (3) 'In War-time,' (4) 'Dirge,' (5) 'Village Festival.' And he adds characteristic notes as to the 'tempo,' e.g., 'In War-time,' is marked 'with rough vigour, almost savagely.'

It is no small achievement to have embodied in this Suite the yearnings, rejoicings and pathos of an elemental and dying race.\*

At its best it will be found that the music of MacDowell is pregnant with that heroic beauty which the Irish poet, Yeats, says, has been paling away out of the arts since 'the decadence, we call progress, set voluptuous beauty in its place.' And in the Celtic Sonata especially is to be found that 'vision of life seen not in impossible unrelief, but in possible relief; of harmonious unity in design, as well as in colour.' It is true, as Fiona Macleod has also said, that 'all evil passions may obtain there, but they move against a spiritual background of pathetic wonder, of tragic beauty and tragic fate.'

The romantic note had so nearly passed beyond the pale of to-day's music that the

\* Compare p. 50 in 'Edward MacDowell,' by L. Gilman, in the 'Living Masters of Music' series (Lane, 1906).

delightful work of MacDowell is a real joy to those who love the eternal vitality of its force. With him the ordinary paraphernalia of romance, as with all imbued with the Celtic idiom, are but obvious symbols of an esoteric passion and æsthetic joy. His music may be called absolute, and it has the engaging frankness of an individuality free from all affectation.

In the following catalogue of his works will be found no dramatic symphony (or any other symphony), no quartet or overture, nor is there any oratorio. One cannot but feel that MacDowell could have done these things had he been so moved and his early death is our loss.

If any be drawn to study the works of the greatest American composer from this brief appreciation it is well.

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*it looks like him though not more*

*drawn*

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## Pageant and Festival Music.

By A.R.

THE various pageants of the last few months are undoubtedly happy events, whether regarded historically, artistically, or as—in a sense—revivals. Probably the Elizabethan pageants were not national in the sense that our present-day ones are, because of the purely personal note always therein evident. Many a worthy burgess, and even humbler citizens, have recently been awakened by a local pageant to a sense of pride in their town, its history, and its relation to the nation.

Not the least important part in these successful presentations has been the artistic use of music by specialists. At Dover, the organist to the corporation, Mr. H. J. Taylor, was responsible for a very capable pageant music book, published by Weekes & Co. His 'Dirge on the Death of Gawaine,' in which the sopranos and contraltos echo the motif introduced by the men's voices, is distinctly good. 'King Henry VIII' and Orlando Gibbons are drawn upon for other sections, and national airs are deftly woven into this interesting musical tapestry.

At Winchester, Mr. Christopher Wilson was, in the main, responsible for the book. That earliest part-song, John of Fornsete's 'Zumer is icumen in,' really a repeating or continuous canon, was included, as well as other traditional airs, and, with the exception of Herr Balling's contributions, the music kept well to the national idiom.

Altogether, this gentle and charming way of teaching history and art has much to commend it, and it might be wise for the authorities to re-enact the same quinquennially.

Festival music is, however, on an entirely different footing, and any performance which pertains merely to the concert hall is to be

depreciated. I do not care how much it may help the reputation of struggling British artists, if the music has not the definitely religious note it should have no place in our cathedrals, held they double as many people. There is absolutely no reason why we of the Anglican-Catholic Communion should follow our Roman Catholic brethren, and, as it were, desecrate our churches between services.

#### SHEFFIELD, OCTOBER 5TH-9TH.

Sheffield, at any rate, cannot have any such complaints cast at her head. This festival then produced a splendid series of concerts, and reflected the greatest credit on all concerned. It is surprising to note that it was only in 1895 that this festival started, when one performance, under Dr. Coward, was given of the 'Elijah.' This year Mr. Wood brought the Queen's Hall orchestra with him, which, combined with the fine Sheffield chorus, made assured an excellent result.

Wisely, I think, the promoters decided to rely on one concert per diem, instead of two as last year. Hence choir, orchestra and audience were alike in a fresh frame of mind for each performance. I have not space to deal with each item of the performances fully, and can only speak of the most interesting ones. César Franck's 'Beatitudes' must come first, because of his exceptional attractiveness to the musician. It was first heard at Glasgow, and next at Cardiff (and elsewhere mutilated). The performance was fine in the extreme, and the full beauty of the mystic music attained the composer's aim in educating one's finest senses. Elgar has a motif in his 'Apostles,' which is very nearly allied to that used by Franck in his Christ phrases. It is a powerful architectonic composition, very modern, yet never without the saving clause of melody, too often absent in many scintillatingly brilliant modern efforts. Amongst the soloists, I was greatly pleased with Mr. H. Witherspoon's Satan music. Mr. D. Dalton and Madame Kirkby Lunn were also fine, of course. Madame Carreño played the B flat minor piano concerto of Tchaikovsky in her customary magnificent manner. Berlioz' 'Te Deum,' which concluded the first day's programme, is decidedly not one of this composer's best works.

Of native works, that by Mr. F. Delius, on a Whitman prose-poem, 'Sea-Drift,' for baritone chorus and orchestra, claims first comment. It is a tragedy of two birds, and the descriptive music is excellent. Dr. Walford Davies' music to 'Everyman' is rather a grey work—yet possibly his finest—and somewhat restless. Relentless Death has

certainly a fine grave setting in the men's voices singing of Everyman's death. Dr. Davies has been criticised for dressing 'Everyman' in twentieth century clothes, but this is absurd, because the play is perennially young, therefore let it have the garb of modernity. Herr Kreisler was in fine form on his Guarnerius, and played the E major concerto, No. 2, of Bach, and later, very finely, the 'Ciaccone.' York Bowen's overture (G minor) I did not care for, but it is remarkable that he was only 18 when this was written, and shows great promise.

Debussy's 'l'Enfant Prodigue' was practically a novelty, because, although played at the Queen's Hall (in Langham Place), as originally it won the Prix de Rome at Paris in 1884, he has re-scored it for Sheffield, so now, with other good things, 'it coomes frae Sheffield.' This is so grateful and graceful a work that I am almost tempted to wish the composer had not essayed another and more ethereal form of writing. The work is full of tender beautiful passages, essentially and idiomatically French.

Verdi's 'Manzoni Requiem' tested the choir to its utmost, and I observed, that splendid as it is in tone quality, it did not respond to a sudden spurt of either sort—pace or attack—with the quickness of comprehension I expected from them. Rimsky-Korsakoff's suite from 'The Eve of Christmas' disappointed me. It is clever, however, national, but slight.

The greatest day of the festival was without doubt that devoted to Bach's 'S. Matthew Passion Music.' Bach's music was, of course, written for a far smaller choir than that employed at Sheffield. Mr. Wood, therefore, wisely utilised an organ (for the piano), and doubled several of the wind parts. Those who closed their eyes during this performance and forgot the undesirable show effects of some of the soloists, felt the power of the music, for it carried one at once to some sacred fane, and associations were strong. The moment one opened one's eyes the music lost colour; hence my conclusion is—not for concert purposes this music.

A charming evening programme (after the Bach in the morning) was made up of works selected from Palestrina, Cornelius, Verdi, Brahms, Strauss, Bach and Beethoven—a catholic but unnational selection. Palestrina's 'Lamentation' was gravely grand. A very good programme was ably supplied, with analytical notes, by Mr. J. A. Rodgers and Mrs. Newmarch.

(To be concluded.)

## The Soi-Disant Secret of the Violin Makers of Cremona.

By MAURICE MCLEOD.

(Continued from Vol. II, page 140).\*

Finally Reade says: 'The unlucky phrase, "varnish of Cremona," has weakened men's powers of observation by fixing a preconceived notion that the varnish must be all one thing. The lost secret is this. The Cremona varnish is not a varnish, but two varnishes; and those varnishes always heterogeneous: that is to say, first the pores of the wood are filled and the grain shown up by one, two, by three and sometimes, though rarely, by four coats of fine oil varnish with some common but clear gum in solution. Then upon this oil varnish, when dry, is laid a heterogeneous varnish, viz., a solution in spirit of some sovereign, high coloured, pellucid, and, above all, tender gum.'

Dr. Grossman quite logically and accurately points out that if the secret lay in the varnish only, that this does not account for the makers who *to-day*, betray the true Italian tone but who worked *after* the time when the glorious old Italian varnish ceased to be used. Reade says that Landolfi was the last to use it about 1760. But he is not quite correct in this date, as Landolfi worked later than this, though this point is immaterial at the moment. It ceased to be used soon after this date. Now, at Messrs. Breitkopf's, I carefully tested two new violins of Seifert, made under the direction of Dr. Grossman, both were completely finished but one was beautifully varnished and the other in the green. Both were built on exactly the same model. Although Dr. Grossman states that it is scientifically impossible for a violin to be changed in tone by any varnish, yet I found a difference between these two Seifert violins—the varnished one is slightly more mellow than the unvarnished one. I was anxious to learn and not in any way prejudiced on the matter. I really did not care which way it was but I wanted to be sure, and I am satisfied that the varnish has some indefinable quality for mellowing an instrument.

Moreover, I have a Klotz violoncello which was varnished with the usual treacly, muddy

\* See p. 139, line 6, for 'can' read 'cannot.'

† 'New Cremona,' p. 9. This is a pamphlet of 144 pp. in a grey paper wrappers, describing Dr. Grossman's theories as exemplified by in Seifert's violins. Published by Breitkopf and Härtel, 54, Great Marlborough Street, 1908. Price one shilling nett.

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mess, which the later members of this family of makers used. This I had removed and proper oil varnish of a soft nature laid on instead and the tone was greatly improved. On the other hand I have played on a Joseph Guarnerius of about 1740 which had no varnish on it, and the tone was undeniably the genuine Joseph tone. I had not played this violin before its varnish was removed, but I cannot imagine it being better than it was without the varnish.

That varnish alone does not produce the best Italian tone, really does not require much refutation, otherwise, why do Strad's vary? Why are many makers with fine varnish not renowned for fine tone? Why are others, e.g., Guadagnini, with hard varnish renowned for fine tone? It is absurd to say that hard varnish prevents the vibrations, because in nature the hard materials are just those which vibrate best, e.g., steel, glass, bone, or ivory and soft ones hardly vibrate at all, as rubber or cardboard.

Also it is absurd to say that hard varnish does not 'go with the wood.' Take a piece of shellac, a square inch of it, bend it and it will return to its original position, so that it is not only pliant but elastic.

As a question of tone take a board and note its tone, then varnish it and you will find that before the varnish dries (whether soft or hard varnish) the note is about half a tone lower; as soon as it is dry the same higher tone as before re-asserts itself.

This I think disposes of the varnish-by-itself theory, and explains how it is that these hundreds of Italian makers left no recipe for varnish. Simply because it really did not much matter and was in common use.

What the makers did keep to themselves was the secret of their construction, particularly the bass-bar, the thicknesses, the quality of the wood, certain sizes of the instruments, and the tones which were relatively produced by sounding the boards. And of course many minor things as the position of the sound post, which varies slightly with each differently constructed instrument. Dr. Grossman has set this out with much care in his book, and has evidently discovered all this for himself but my first master told me these things in the year 1885.

The theory also that age and continual playing—are material factors in the genuine tone, is exploded because it is well-known that one of Tarisio's Stradivarius' violins, which had hardly been played at all, was as fine as it could be when Vuillaume had it, well over 100 years after it was made. I myself have

played on this instrument and its tone is superb.

(To be continued.)

We had the pleasure of seeing a very fine set of orchestral instruments made to the order of Madame Melba intended for Mr. Marshall Hall's Orchestra at Melbourne, when we called on Messrs. Rudall, Carte and Co., the well-known musical instrument makers of 23, Berners Street, W. Each instrument was in a leather case on which was lettered 'Melba Gift.' We understand they were made at the flat pitch.

## Our Music Folio.

*Under this heading occasional reviews of music will appear.*

**'The Comprehensive Scale and Arpeggio Manual for Violin,'** by Léon J. Fontaine, price 5/-, Published by EDWIN ASHDOWN, LTD., Hanover Square, London.

A most clear and useful aid to violin playing, beginning with the easiest form of scales and arpeggios, and gradually leading up through fifty-five pages to a thorough knowledge of the violin, as to its positions and fingering. Various bowings and rhythms are fully described as the student proceeds. In the scales of one octave it is clearly shown where the semitones lie—for the convenience of the beginner; and we would say to all who use this book, 'carefully read through the preface.' We may mention that the figure 5 is used in the fingering to indicate the extension of the fourth finger, whenever it occurs.

We heartily recommend this practical Violin Manual, and the subjoined table of contents will show how comprehensive it is.

Major scales in one octave with tonic minors, melodic and harmonic forms. Major and minor scales in two octaves, arpeggios of major and minor chords with first and second inversions in two octaves, chromatic scales in two octaves, chords of the dominant seventh with inversions in two octaves, chords of the diminished seventh in two octaves. Major and minor scales in three octaves, arpeggios of major and minor chords in three octaves, chromatic scales in three octaves, chords of the dominant seventh in three octaves with major resolutions, chords of the diminished seventh in three octaves with minor resolutions. Major and minor scales in thirds; in sixths; in octaves; and in tenths.

Published by **Price & Reynolds**, 41, Berners Street, W.

'Dance of the Teddy Bears,' by Mark Jerome. Price 4/-. This is a delightful additional dance to the Peter Pan series for the production this Christmas.

Published by **J. Roberts & Co.**, 180, Wardour Street, W.

'Sweet Memories Valse,' by Archibald Joyce. Price 2/- nett., and 'Sweet Valse' quite one of the composer's best.

'The Moke's Parade,' for piano. Two-step by Archibald Joyce. Price 2/- nett. Mr. Joyce has a real gift in writing, and this two-step is characteristic and goes with a swing.

'The Magic Shoes Valse,' by Richard Eldridge. Price 2/- nett. A delightful waltz that 'will make you dance,' one of the best production this season.

Published by **Joseph Williams Ltd.**, 32, Great Portland Street, W.

'Sympathy,' words by Mary L. Hay, music by Charles Marshall; price 2/- nett. A song sweetly expressed, asking the boon of sympathy throughout. In four keys; in D (original) (B to E); in E flat (C to F); in F (D to G); in G (E to A).

'The Sleepy Song,' abridged from the poem by Josephine Daskam, music by Katharine Barry; price 2/- nett. A really clever song, which we think both by the words and music would be bound to aid the listeners into the land of slumber in spite of themselves. In three keys. No. 1 in D (A to D); No. 2 in F (C to F); No. 3 in G (D to G).

'Ypsilanti,' words by Arthur Davenport, music by H. G. Pellissier; price 2/- nett. Sung by Miss Gwennie Mars in 'The Follies' entertainment, and by Miss Margaret Cooper. A humorous song (after the nigger fashion) of a lover who sighs for his lady—and apparently must still 'sigh,' until his fortune is made. The words and music come pleasantly and easily, and the song lends itself to the mood and emotion of the singer—which, we may add, is sure to be a favourite wherever heard. In A flat (C to F).

'My Moon,' words by Arthur Davenport, music by H. G. Pellissier; price 2/- nett. Sung in 'The Follies' entertainment. The lover's plaint to the moon to keep shining—

'You've such a charm about you,  
Feel I cannot do without you,  
And so pray, dear  
Moon, moon, moon,  
Grant me this one boon,  
Keep your light for ever shining,  
Moon, my moon!'

In F (E flat to A). We give the foregoing few lines from the song which indeed is a pretty one, and full of the 'moonlight.'

'Ein Liebeslied,' for violin and piano, by Seymour Powell, price 4/- (also as pianoforte solo 4/-). Composed originally for the pianoforte, it appears, but it adds a delightful piece to the violinists repertoire. Moderately difficult.

'Abendstern,' composed for the pianoforte by Seymour Powell, price 4/-; also for violin and piano 4/-. A piece to play in the gloaming, full of sweet melody and harmony with constant change of expression, and a pleasing 'movement' throughout. Not difficult.

'Sérénade,' for violin and piano, by Luigi D'Ambrosio (op. 9) price 4/-. This is sure to please the advanced violinist. The 'Sérénade' is full of freshness and variety, but both the solo and accompaniment are difficult.

'Burlesque,' for violin and piano, by A. D'Ambrosio (op. 43); price 4/-. Very effective; difficult.

'La Belle Picarde,' sérénade pour le piano, par Arnaldo Sartorio (op. 200, No. 10); price 4/-. Pianists will welcome this bright and charming solo. The foreign fingering is given *above* the notes, while the English is given *below*. Moderately difficult.

'Malaguena,' (Habanera), pour le piano par Arnaldo Sartorio (op. 200, No. 8); price 4/-. Another delightful and characteristic piece from the same composer's pen, that brings a freshness into our

English life. The foreign and English fingering are given as before. Moderately difficult.

'Pierrot et Colombine,' pour le piano par Edouard L'Enfant; price 4/-. The music is bright, pretty, and descriptive, and through this medium the pair exchange their messages. Moderately difficult, to difficult.

'Since Yesterday,' words by Florence Hoare, music by Conrad King; price 2/- nett. A love song that presents its theme in rather out of the ordinary run, and therefore comes very pleasantly. In three keys. No. 1 in E flat (B flat to E flat); No. 2 in F original (C to F); No. 3 in G (D to G).

Published by **J. H. Larway**, 14, Wells Street, Oxford Street, W.

'Modern Violin School,' by Joseph Holbrooke; price 2/6 nett. This book contains copious examples of violin playing, but it is for the student who has laid good foundation from an earlier primer. This book is calculated to strengthen and develop the student's work already done. In his Preface the author says his 'Modern Violin School,' has been written with a desire to fill up for the student, and professional alike, the many omissions as regards the arpeggios and scales in their different bowings and positions, with their immediate key relations. And closes by saying: 'As many Violin Schools invest a deal of space in preparatory matter, I have thought it advisable to omit much of the elementary knowledge, etc., the whole of which can always be had in a separate primer.'

'Variations' (No. 2) for full orchestra—'The Girl I left behind me' (op. 37) also for Military Band, by Joseph Holbrooke. Pianoforte arrangements by the composer may be obtained (collectively) in book form at 5/- nett. Piano solo very difficult.

The Viking, poem No. 2, for grand orchestra, after Longfellow's Poem—'The Skeleton in Armour'—by Joseph Holbrooke (op. 32). Arranged for the pianoforte by Ernest Austin, price 5/- nett. The music follows the poem in detail. Piano solo very difficult.

Published by **Elkin & Co., Ltd.**, 8-10, Beak Street, Regent Street, W.

'La Débutanté,' Valse Lente, by Loius Rénaud. Piano solo 2/- nett; Orchestra 1/4; septet 1/-. A pretty, melodious little valse, easy for the pianoforte.

'Air and Fughetta,' in the old style—by Cecil Hazlehurst, pianoforte solo; price 2/- nett. The melody is pleasing, and so also is the classic form of this little work. We are told that the original version of the Fughetta, was written as a variation on a theme composed by Dr. Walter Carroll of Manchester University. Moderately difficult.

'Reverie,' for violin and piano (op. 14, No. 1), by Donald Baxter. A delightful meditative solo for the violin with a very effective harp-like accompaniment. It requires a good violinist to present the composer's idea well, for the solo lays constantly in the higher positions, much expression is to be observed, and the tempo changes frequently. Price 2/- nett.

'Irish Names,' words by John Ludlow, music by T. Hilton-Turvey; price 2/- nett. A sparkling, humorous song—introducing a string of Irish names in the refrain.

'The Tiger,' words by Fred E. Weatherley, music by Robert Eden; price 2/- nett. A fine song of humour, with a warning! In two keys. No. 1 in C (C to D); No. 2 in D (D to E).

'Blue Eyes,' words by Ella Brown, music by Reginald Somerville; price 2/- nett. A pretty, simple love song, words and music are alike pleasing. In two keys. No. 1 in A flat (C to E flat); No. 2 in C (E to G).

Published by **C. Woolhouse**, 174, Wardour Street, W.

'The Love of Angels,' words and music by Gerald Lane. Price 2/- nett. A fine song with beautiful words, in D, E flat, and F.

'Come over the Sea Beloved,' song, words by Harold Boulton. music by Percy Elliott. Price 2/- nett. A sad but beautiful song, the refrain of which is 'Come over the Sea, Beloved, 'tis weary waiting alone.'

'Violetti,' song words by T. Haffermann, music by Percy Elliott. Price 2/- nett. A song telling of the 'one Maid in all the World,' in D and F.

'Daffodil Days,' words by Elizabeth Forrester, music by J. Cliffe Forrester. Price 2/- nett. Compass E to F. A beautifully sweet song speaking of the return of spring, and the music seems to glow with renewed vitality.

'Rosie,' Ballad, words after Goethe by C. H. Lambach, music by Harris Frewin. Price 2/- nett. A fine Scotch song, written like the Scots National Ballads with quaint words.

'In Eighteen-Five October,' sea ballad, words by E. Forrester, music by J. Cliffe Forrester. Price 2/- nett. A stirring patriotic British song with or without chorus. It must be sung with spirit.

'A Dramatic Choral Symphony' (Homage to E. A. Poe), words by Edgar Allan Poe, music by Joseph Holbrooke (op. 48). Vocal score. Copyright by Joseph Holbrooke, mcmviii. Price 3/6 nett, London: Sidney Riorden, 12-13, Noel Street, Oxford Street, W. Size 10½ by 7½ inches: pp. iv and 156 in grey decorated wrappers.

This Choral Symphony, of which we have the vocal score before us, was performed by the Leeds Choral Union (at Leeds), on November 11th, 1908. This body commissioned the work and certainly Mr. Holbrooke has done them the compliment of writing some extremely difficult music (both vocal and instrumental). But, to their credit, under the composer's baton, there was not the least hesitancy in attacking correctly the many dissonant intervals which abound in the work.

It will be remembered that the first two movements, 'The Haunted Palace' and 'The Hymn to the Virgin' were given at the Bristol Festival in October, and created a favourable impression. The complete work which includes 'The City in the Sea' and 'The Valley Nis' as the last two movements, certainly enhances this predilection in its favour.

The work is in four sections, thus more or less following the usual symphony arrangement, illustrating four of Poe's poems which, in themselves, have no special relation. But they make an effective setting because of the unity achieved by the composer in catching the mysterious quality of Poe's verse. Probably no other living composer could have done this with the same success.

The deliberate ugliness, of which the local critics of course fell foul, have a definite value and place in just the same way as Michelangelo sometimes introduced a discordant, and brutish or satyr-like face in a great fresco, or religious picture. Or, again, the mediæval carvers put a frightful gargoyle in the midst of an exquisitely proportioned facade. It is, therefore, nothing to us that Mr. Holbrooke uses a persistent phrase or figure, 'through a succession of appallingly unorthodox harmonies,' because a certain colour or atmosphere which he wanted is thus effectively gained.

At a first hearing it is exceedingly difficult to be fair to a complex modern composition, but Mr. Holbrooke must feel that he is no prophet to the critics of his own country (judging by the local press criticisms)

although the chorus, orchestra and audience alike, greeted the work with cordial approval. We, however, much look forward to hearing the same choir give the work this year in London, again under the composer's direction. We think 'The City in the Sea' is perhaps the finest of the four settings, if anything, the last movement has a less out-of-the-ordinary effect and an effort at a climax. However, the Leeds Choral Union is to be much commended on their courage, in helping the younger men in the way they do. Long may they do it.

'The Viking, Poem No. 2,' by Joseph Holbrooke.

We have been favoured with a final proof (31 pp. folio) of the piano score of a new orchestral work entitled: 'The Viking,' by Joseph Holbrooke (op. 32). This work will be issued, we understand, immediately. It is a definite piece of programme-writing of course, and is excellently descriptive. Various headings occur throughout as, 'Speak, Speak thou fearful guest,' 'Oft to his frozen lair, tracked I the grisly bear,' 'Once as I told in glee, tales of the stormy sea,' 'Soft eyes did glaze on me, burning yet tender,' 'Loud sang the minstrels all,' 'Scarce had I put to sea, bearing the maid with me.' The death of the maiden occurs towards the end, and ascent of a soul is finely conceived. Altogether, this is a very interesting work, which we look forward to hearing in London at any early date.

We understand that Mr. Holbrooke is writing an opera based on some Welsh legends contained in the 'Mabinogian.' This will be a trilogy of musical drama—each taking about two hours and a half to perform. The scenic arrangements may be expected to be unusual, as there will be a hidden chorus amongst other things. The libretto is by Mr. T. E. Ellis, the author of 'Lanval,' a play produced at the 'Playhouse' last May. The title is 'Dylan, Son of the Wave.' The first performance of the prologue will probably be given at the new series of orchestral concerts, shortly to be given by Mr. T. Beecham, who is also creating a new choir called The Metropolitan Choral Society. Anyone desiring to join should write to the Secretary, 60, Regent Street, W., for particulars. The society is to have both active and honorary members.

## Auction Prices.

At Messrs. Glendining & Co's. Argyll Galleries on December 23rd, the hammer fell at the following prices:—

### Violins—

A fine old French attributed to Lupot £6 5s., Italian attributed to Amati family 4 17s. 6d., French by Charles Gaillard £7 5s., Italian by Joannes Franciscus Pressenda, Turin, 1832, with bow in case £39, Carlo Landolfi £6 5s., Old French in case £7, Italian by Carlo Rotta 1746 £6, Klotz £5 17s. 6d., labelled Jacobus Stainer with bow £5, French copy of Maggini £6 15s.

### Violas—

William Forster £5 5s., Chanot of Paris £4 17s. 6d.

### Cellos—

Kennedy £4, Nicholas Raccaris £5 10s., Peter Walmsley £6 10s.

Gold-mounted bow by James Tubbs & Sons £5 15s.



## The Old Fiddler to the New Fiddler

(A Dream of New Year's Eve).

BY OLGA RACSTER.

Laddie, come you close beside me ; lay your warm young hand in mine,  
Press your fresh cheek on my pillow ; let your curls my lips entwine.

See you, dear ! the time grows shortened ; swift the moments ring my knell.  
From a world of mystic shadows, I can hear the tolling bell ;

Bell that calls me loud and louder, bids me lay my fiddle down,  
For a younger, braver player comes to claim my fiddler's crown.

Yet, before you take it, laddie, you must pay the fullest price ;  
You must listen boy ! I tell you ! to an aged man's advice.

Ah ! you start with frown impatient. (Youth was ever arrogant,  
Caution's seeds hurls to the waste-wind ; scatters, till the stock is spent.)

You would touch but top harmonics ; all the graver sounds be-gird ;  
Make my grand old Stradivari, whistle blithely as a bird.

You would wield your bow as lightning streaking round Cologne's great spire.  
Make the heavens madly answer, flashing back celestial fire.

You would pluck the strings my laddie, gaily as a troubadour ;  
Doff your cap to every beauty. Conquering—pass from door to door.

You would live and play like this, a laughing, fiddling, happy boy.  
But take heed ! my laddie, for a fiddle's more than just a toy :

I have found that top harmonics all depend upon the strings,  
Weaken but their tender pulses, and their heart no longer brings

Happy fancies tripping gaily, pirouetting on the earth ;  
Dancing here and there as may be, till we hold our sides in mirth.

Then, to wield your bow as lightning, you must have a giant's strength ;  
Firm the wrist, but light the pressure, that can race from length to length.

And to pluck the strings so softly, that the maiden's cheek grows warm,  
You must make your fingers tireless, gentle, subtle, smooth as lawn ;

You must touch the strings with surety, or she'll fly you with a pout ;  
Call you stupid, foolish, ugly ; nothing but a country lout.

Last, if you would fiddle gaily, be a laughing, happy boy,  
You must first get wisdom daily, not a moment misemploy.

Don't play Bach before Corelli, or Viotti after Rode,  
Never touch a top harmonic, till you're certain of the note.

Don't play sparkling Paganini, with a Beethovenian mind,  
Or Wieniawski like a classic, nor make Spohr a hideous grind.

Don't play feathery pizzicato, till your sure you're strings are sound ;  
Or wield your bow with blacksmith's strength till by blacksmith's rules your bound.

Ah ! lad you're growing restless and so weary of my prosing,  
Go ! take my dear Cremona there, in soft-lined nest reposing.

Adieu ! these precepts take to heart, and fiddle—fiddle daily,  
Pray God ! it take not all your life to learn to fiddle gaily.

Adieu ! Adieu ! Adieu !





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